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MEMORANDUM FOR: Chairman, COMIREX

SUBJECT : Near-Term Planning for Middle East Photo Reconnaissance

1. I have three comments on the subject paper, dated 21 November 1973:
2. I do not agree that "the overall SR-71 results have been good considering all factors" -- whatever meaning I put to that careful phrasing. The system was capable of acquiring coverage useful for answering high priority questions, but did not do so for reasons you know.
3. If and when more Middle East missions are flown we continue to risk receiving imagery from them of a quality that does not assist the PIs to answer questions regarding important activities, objects and areas. The way to reduce this risk is to charge NPIC with providing a "last minute" review of the final flight track plans. I recommend that at the top of page 5 you insert the following after the word "execution": "NPIC will assist further by participating with the SR-71 unit commander's staff in the final review of a flight plan."
4. I question that SR-71 operations "at near daily rates" (which means to me one a day or one every other day) would be a productive and efficient frequency relevant to our needs in a situation of renewed hostilities. I do subscribe to a regular frequency. I imagine that once every third or fourth day would be productive and efficient.

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JOHN J. HICKS
Director

National Photographic Interpretation Center

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